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metroNEWS

Your essential daily news | WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2015

High 9°C/Low 9°C A mix of sun and cloud



JOE LOFARO/METRO



DINE AND DASH

Mellos' landmark sign goes missing as owner vows to reopen elsewhere metroNEWS

LGBT centre offers home for holidays

First time Kind stays open over Christmas



Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

If home is not a welcoming place, the Christmas season can be a tough time for members of the LGBT community facing disappointment, bewilderment and rejection from families.

This year, those who consider Ottawa's queer resource centre, Kind, a second home will be able to come home for the holidays.

It's the first time the centre, which runs on donations, will be open during the holiday. Programming includes a video-game tournament, board-game hangout and holiday-film screening.

"During the course of the year we were hearing from people about how much they dislike the holidays or that they wouldn't have enough money to go see their families," said Carling Miller, executive director of Kind, formerly known as Pink Triangle Services.

This year, thanks to the help of volunteers, the centre will remain open from Dec. 21 to Jan. 1.

Miller said a number of youth leaders for the centre's queer-trans program put together two weeks of social programming and a community Christmas dinner.

"In the case of one of our youth leaders, she was rejected by her family and she's been on her own for a while," said Miller. "She wanted to do this because it was important to help other people to have a place to go."

On Christmas Day, there will also be an open hangout for all ages at Kind's 331 Cooper St. headquarters.



Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation profit last year:

$2 BILLION

Wage increase for workers at the OLG Rideau Carleton Raceway Slots since 2009:

$0

On December 16, the OLG locked out 124 of its workers for refusing to accept a contract that freezes wages for two more years and removes existing pension language from the current collective agreement. The wages that have been frozen since 2009 means that workers at the Rideau Carleton Raceway Slots now earn over **8% less** than workers at some OLG facilities. The OLG now claims that it is ready to come back to the bargaining table, but what it doesn't say is that it's still insisting on the same wage freeze and pension changes, which the union membership rejected by a 96% vote.

This holiday season, let's tell OLG to

#PLAYFAIR

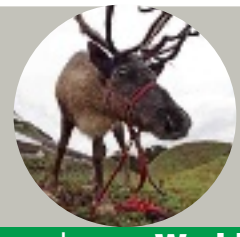
and give its workers a raise!

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news



As Rudolph gears up to guide Santa's sleigh, science explains his shiny, red nose. **World**

Space start-up nets $500k

CANADIAN SPACE AGENCY

Student contracted to improve CSA software



Adam Feibel
Ottawa Business Journal

A new Canadian space industry startup based in Ottawa has its sights set high after landing its first major contract with the Canadian Space Agency.

The nine-month-old Mission Control Space Services will lead a $500,000 deal to design software to improve the efficiency of the CSA's autonomous rovers. For instance, the startup's technology will help ensure the rovers won't get stuck in new terrain.

Ewan Reid, the company's founder and CEO, says the "fundamental objective is to see this technology on a rover on Mars or on the moon in the next five or 10 years."

The 38-year-old had a successful career in the space industry before deciding to venture out on his own, helped in large part by Carleton University's Lead to Win incubator program while he was pursuing a master's degree in technology innovation management at the school.

Reid says he felt there was no better time than the present to start his own company. He pulled together an executive team of members from his existing talent network, many of whom were former classmates at the International Space University, where he completed the space studies program in the summer of 2013.



Ewan Reid is the founder of Mission Control Space Services. COURTESY MARK HOLLERON

The company specializes in robotics, including real-time operations and simulations. It also does external consulting, helping other companies meet the stringent requirements of the industry and navigate the bureaucracy of space agencies to get funding and commercialize their technology.

> **There's a big, exciting new shift that's going on in the space world.**
> Ewan Reid

Under the 21-month CSA contract, Mission Control — backed by a team of two other Canadian space companies and two outside academic partners — will develop an autonomous soil assessment system for planetary rovers, an area marked "priority for enhancement" by the space agency.

Currently, rovers can detect and reroute around large obstacles and steep slopes, but their weakness is their inability to adequately assess terrain quality. It leaves them vulnerable to "unknown soil hazards" such as patches of soft, fluffy sand.

"This is a situation where the Mars Spirit rover, which had a really successful, long mission, eventually did meet its demise because it got stuck in sand," says Reid, who has degrees in electrical engineering and economics from Queen's University.

Mission Control's completed project would produce a system that allows a rover to avoid those trouble areas. By working in the software realm, Reid says preparing spacecraft for missions will rely less heavily on state-of-the-art hardware solutions that are expensive and time-consuming to develop and implement.

"It is a big win for us. But that said, it's a 21-month contract and it's actually not as much money as it seems like it is."

Reid expects the company will be working on between four to six programs for the CSA and other customers within the next six months.

"Space is changing a lot right now," he explains. "There's a big, exciting new shift that's going on in the space world, and I want to say in five years that I'm glad I started this space business five years ago, rather than saying I wished I started it five years ago."

ANTI-LABOUR

Unions hope Feds reverse Tory laws



Michael Woods
Metro | Ottawa

Federal public service unions hope the Liberal government is just getting started in reversing laws, passed by the former Conservative government, that they argue are anti-labour.

"We hope that they will continue down this path," Debi Daviau, president of the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, said after the government took its first step toward repealing a controversial bill on union spending disclosure.

The government is waiving requirements under Bill C-377 that would have required unions to meticulously track spending so it could be publicly disclosed. The government said it will completely repeal the law, which passed amid widespread opposition.

"It was a ridiculous piece of legislation that even Conservative senators were speaking out against," Daviau said.

But there are other laws passed by the previous government that the unions hope the Liberals will re-examine.

For example, the Liberals also promised during the election campaign to repeal Bill C-525, which labour groups argued made it harder to form unions.

There are also elements of Bill C-4, a Conservative omnibus budget bill from 2013, related to matters such as arbitration, that the unions are challenging.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS



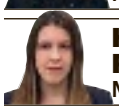
Watson among top 5 mayors: Poll

FORUM RESEARCH

73 per cent of voters approve of mayor's work to date



Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa



Haley Ritchie
Metro | Ottawa

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson ranks among the top five Canadian mayors when it comes to voters' approval, says a national pollster.

A Forum Research poll released Tuesday suggests 73 per cent of Ottawa voters approve of Watson's work to date.

He's most popular with people aged 35 to 44 (79 per cent) and those who make between $100,000 and $250,000 a year (77 per cent). Eighty per cent of voters with a post-graduate degree also approve.

Lorne Bozinoff, president of Forum Research, said Watson's rating is "unusually high."

"He would be in the top five in terms of the 30 biggest cities and their mayors in Canada," Bozinoff said.

John Tory, Toronto's mayor, had an approval rating of 77 per cent in November.

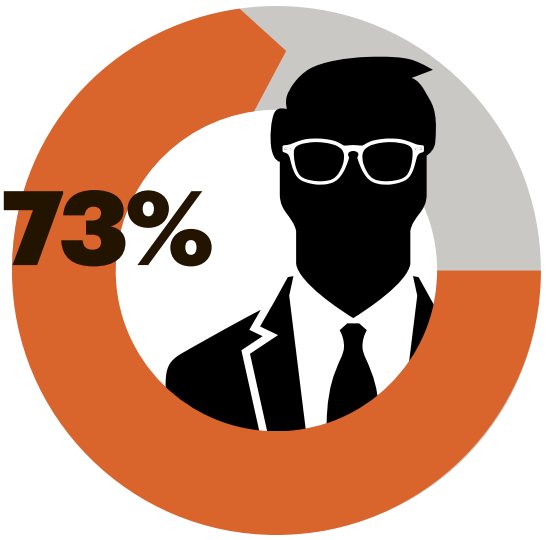
Watson's success is unusual given he's been in office for five years.

"He's got a pretty extended honeymoon period," Bozinoff said.

Watson called the results a "nice Christmas present," but didn't put much stock in it, saying "polls go up and go down."

He said he spends as much time as possible in the community. "We can get too trapped with the inner workings of city hall."

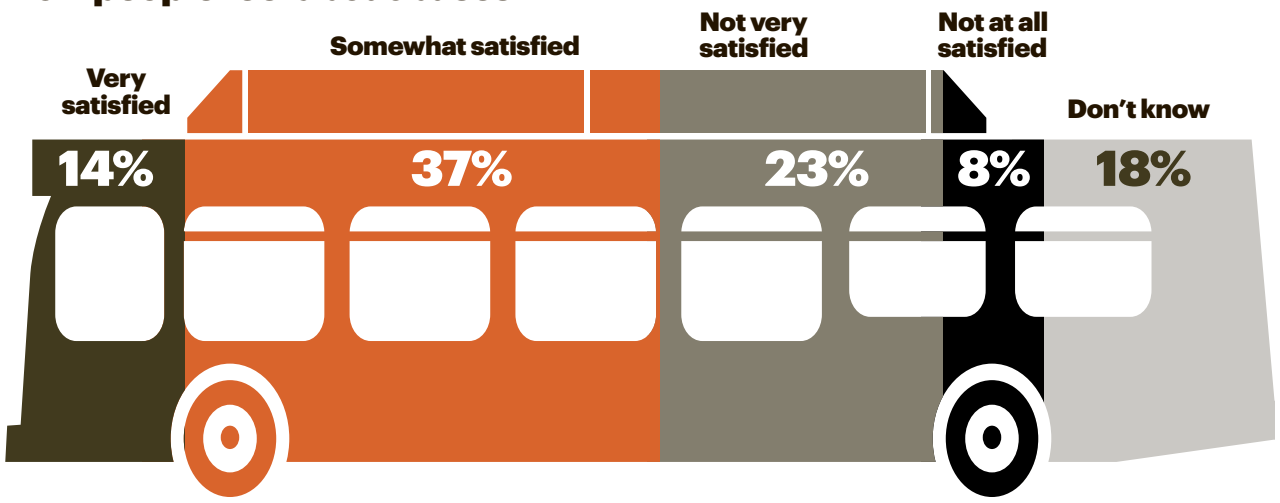
Jim Watson approval rating



Concern about 5 issues, ranked:

1. **Youth gangs** (45% very concerned)
2. **Traffic congestion** (44% very concerned)
3. **Availability of guns** (42% very concerned)
4. **Budget deficit** (39% very concerned)
5. **Innes Road Jail** (29% very concerned)

How people feel about buses



KEY TOPICS

Traffic and guns top of mind

Gun violence and traffic congestion are major concerns for Ottawa residents, the poll indicates.

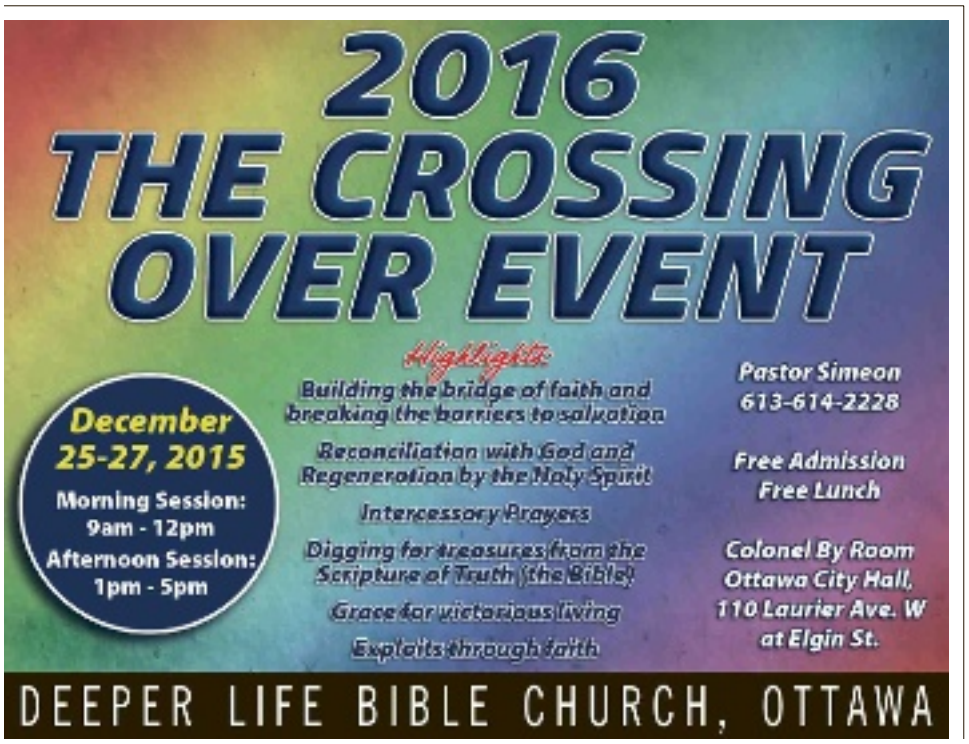
Forty-six per cent of voters were "very concerned" about gang activity; 44 per cent said traffic congestion was very concerning and 42 per cent worried about gun access. The results reflect this fall's budget debate, when councillors argued whether officers should be moved from traffic units to address gang activity.

OC Transpo

Only 14 per cent of respondents said they're "very satisfied" with OC Transpo's transit service. Another 37 per cent are somewhat satisfied, the poll indicates.

Young people were most satisfied with transit services, while passengers between 55 and 64 were least impressed.

FORUM RESEARCH POLLED 812 VOTERS USING AN AUTOMATED TELEPHONE SURVEY ON DEC. 19. THE RESULTS ARE CONSIDERED ACCURATE PLUS OR MINUS 3 PERCENTAGE POINTS, 19 TIMES OUT OF 20.



INVESTIGATION

Historic Mellos sign removed



Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

Ottawa police say the neon sign adorning the top of historic Mellos diner is in a "secure place" after it was removed overnight.

It's not clear who exactly removed the sign. However, the Twitter account @TamaraKB posted a photo at 7:59 a.m. Tuesday, which appeared to show the sign being hoisted on the back of a large truck. "The great #Mellos sign heist of 2015," wrote the Twitter user.

Police are investigating the incident after the landlord reported it, said Const. Marc Soucy.

Central district investigators are investigating and have been in touch with Mellos and the landlord.

The removal comes hours after the diner hosted a "last supper" Monday evening to cap off an unsuccessful online fundraiser to cover the cost of moving to another location in the market.

The diner, which opened in 1942, was forced to close down after its lease expires at the end of the year. Neighbouring Mexican restaurant Ace Mercado was given the option to lease the property.

Ace Mercado has been on the receiving end of harsh criticism over the last month over its decision to take up the offer from the landlord.

Its exterior windows were pelted with eggs and ketchup overnight, presumably as a sign of protest. They were quickly cleaned up Tuesday morning.

A staff member who didn't want to be identified said the Mellos sign was "stolen" and claimed it belonged to the city.

Mellos is located in a ByWard Market Heritage Conservation district, so the building and its sign are protected under the Ontario Heritage Act, according to Sally Coutts, a co-ordinator in the city's Heritage Services Branch.

"An application to alter would be required to move it, or change it. That application would be considered by the Built Heritage Sub-committee, Planning Committee and City Council. No such permission has been given," Coutts said in an email statement.

A representative from Mellos could not be immediately reached for comment.

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Track-crossing targeted

TRANSPORT CANADA

Report IDs places where trespassing is most frequent



Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

Transport Canada is identifying trespassing hot spots in an effort to stop train track-crossers in their tracks.

A report obtained by Metro through an Access to Information request shows the department is reviewing the highest railway trespassing spots in Canada.

According to a report dated May 2015, there have been 1,669 trespassing collisions on Canadian railroads between 1990 and 2014, not including suicides and at-grade collisions.

That data has been used to map the busiest 373 trespassing spots along 597 kilometres of track.

According to the report, the ultimate goal is to develop "countermeasures" to help regulators, railway operators and municipalities stop people from crossing the tracks illegally.



Fallowfield train station CONTRIBUTED/VIA RAIL CANADA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Hot spots will be prioritized based on the area's historic number of collisions, proximity to residential areas and schools, speed limits on the tracks and the volume of trains passing through, the report says.

Transport Canada did not provide a list of the hot spots when Metro Ottawa requested it. Data from the Transportation Safety Board shows there have been 23 trespassing collisions in the Ottawa area since 2004. Nineteen of them were fatal.

Two of the deaths occurred along the O-Train line near Walkley Road in 2007 and 2009.

The rest of the incidents were outside the city of Ottawa: eight in Alexandria, five in Smiths Falls, and two each in Beachburg, Chalk River and Winchester. Prescott and Brockville also each had one accident.

Kingston's tracks have had 70 trespassing incidents in that time, and Belleville has had 30.

The department's spokesperson Natasha Gauthier didn't address the report directly, but said Transport Canada "has taken steps to mitigate rail trespassing through various programs and initiatives."

That includes partnering with the Railway Association of Canada to educate Canadians about train track hazards.

It is not clear when a final hot spots report, or recommendations to stop trespassing, will be completed.

1,669

The number of trespassing collisions on Canadian railroads between 1990 and 2014, according to a May 2015 Transport Canada report. This number does not include suicides or collisions at official crossings.
TRANSPORT CANADA

POLICE

Herongate swarming alert

The police robbery unit has alerted officers from other units that the Herongate area needs extra attention to deter would-be criminals in the wake of a rise in the number of swarmings.

"Certainly, our district and our front-line people are aware of the spike of robberies in that area," said Staff Sgt. Michael Haarbosch, who leads the police robbery unit.

Since mid-November there have been 12 swarmings in the area — most in Herongate, one in Alta Vista and others just across Walkley Road in nearby Heatherington. Haarbosch said the spike could be due to the mild weather.

The increase in the Herongate area bucks the trend across the city. Incidence of swarming is actually down for the city as a whole this year as compared to 2014.

There have so far been 178 swarmings in 2015, down from 204 this time last year.

ERIN MCCRACKEN/METROLAND MEDIA

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O TANNENBAUM TRIMMING THE TREE Stephane Caron uses a chainsaw to trim the base of a Christmas tree on Tuesday afternoon at the ByWard Market at the corner of York and Dalhousie streets. He's selling trees from Saint-Fortunat, Que., right until Christmas Eve. JOE LOFARO/METRO

North Kanata: 15% drive dangerously

TRAFFIC

Most of ward's motorists obey laws, but many often speed

Statistics show speeding in north Kanata is no more rampant than elsewhere in the city, says Ottawa manager of traffic services Phil Landry.

That butts up against the idea, circulated often at public meetings, that Kanata North ward has a particular problem with that traffic offence.

"I think probably you'll find that all across the city it's a similar kind of a problem," said ward Coun. Marianne Wilkinson. She has sided with residents who feel speeding in the community is especially bad.

Though speeding in north Kanata may not be any worse than elsewhere in the city, Wilkinson said that doesn't mean nothing needs to be done.

Most people aren't travelling far above the speed limit, she said, but a problem exists with the 15 per cent who are driving very fast — or those who are otherwise acting dangerously, with behaviour like driving past school buses that have their lights flashing.

"It only takes one," said Wilkinson.

Metroland Media looked into spot speed surveys, with Landry's assistance, to get a sense of how bad speeding really is in the ward. The surveys are posted on Wilkinson's website.

There are 14 surveys available, with details from three streets, from 2013 to 2015. They found most drivers travel below the speed limit or between five and 10 kilometres an hour faster.

However, some drivers were recorded going as fast as 86 km/h in a 50-km/h zone (Second Line Road) and 70 in a 40 zone (Morgan's Grant Way).

Those are the drivers that police are asked to deal with, said Landry, while other city services concern themselves with the 85 per cent of drivers who drive at slower speeds.

> **"All across the city it's a similar kind of a problem.**
> Coun. Marianne Wilkinson

In each report, the 85th percentile speed — the speed at which 85 per cent of drivers drive at or below — is indicated, giving traffic services and other departments an idea of what level the speed limit should be.

On Beaverbrook Road, for instance, the 85th percentile was 49 km/h, with the posted speed limit at 40 km/h.

Asked whether north Kanata has a particular problem with speeding, Landry said, "The data shows cars going 60 or 70 km/h … and those are the drivers that we need police to focus on, (but) we have these same issues throughout the city, out in Orleans, in Ottawa South."

ADAM KVETON/METROLAND MEDIA



Gifting drones has regulators nervous

TRANSPORTATION

UAVs a risk to manned aircraft, says director

A new toy under the tree this year is making Transport Canada nervous.

On Christmas morning, it's expected thousands of drones will be unwrapped and take to the skies in test flights across the country, all piloted by newbie aviators.

With the "exponential" growth of the drone industry, the federal regulator wants to make sure the new pilots — and they are indeed pilots — know the rules and risks around operating their new machines.

"Our real concern given the growth in this industry is around the risk to aircraft in the air and to people on the ground," said Aaron McCrorie, Transport Canada's director general of civil aviation.



Drone enthusiast McKinley Raham lost his drone in a Toronto park but was reunited with it after he made lost-pet-style posters. TODD KOROL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

McCrorie said few recreational drone operators have any training. "Ignorance is perhaps our biggest challenge. People don't know what it means to operate safely," he said.

The caution comes at the end of a year when commercial pilots have reported a growing number of worrisome encounters with drones, also known as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

Transport Canada has launched an awareness campaign to promote the safe operation of drones. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Close calls with drones

1 May
An Air Canada jet at Toronto's Pearson International Airport deviated from its flight path to avoid a UAV flying directly in the busy departure route.

2 July
The pilots of a Jazz Airlines turboprop reported a near miss with a drone during their arrival at Edmonton International Airport. The crew initially thought it was another aircraft but as it passed below, the captain identified it as a UAV.

3 August
Water bombers fighting a forest fire in B.C. were grounded for several hours after a drone was spotted in the area. Afterward, the B.C. government said it would consider changing its Wildfire Act to possibly punish irresponsible drone operators.

CANNABIS

Canadians call on the PM for pardon

Marcus Richardson is, in the eyes of the law, a criminal.

Never mind that a judge ruled the six kilograms of cannabis police found in his car was for severely ill patients at a medical marijuana dispensary.

Or that the same judge imposed only a minimum sentence because anything more would fail to maintain "a just, peaceful and safe society."

He's a criminal — and so are scores of other Canadians who face barriers to travel and work because they were caught with a drug that the government now intends to legalize.

"My charge wasn't like, 'He was practising civil disobedience at a place that was helping sick and dying people improve the quality of their last days on earth,'" Richardson said.

"If the charge read like that, I'd have no problem with it. It reads like, 'I'm a marijuana trafficker.'"

Canadians with criminal records for marijuana crimes are eagerly waiting to see if Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will offer pardons when pot is legalized. Tens of thousands are charged with possession every year.



Marcus Richardson
DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Richardson was driving across Vancouver's Lions Gate Bridge in 1998 when police stopped him at a roadblock and found several kilograms of marijuana and $6,000 in his trunk.

A judge found the drugs were intended only for B.C. Compassion Club Society members. He was convicted of possession for the purpose of trafficking and received a suspended sentence and six months' probation.

Today, the 42-year-old father of three holds a federal licence to grow and possess marijuana and runs a business selling equipment for medical cannabis users. THE CANADIAN PRESS



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RESEARCH

The science of Rudolph's nose, eyes



A reindeer grazes at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Everyone knows Rudolph has a red nose but what about his eyes?

Prompted by questions from his four-year-old daughter, anthropology professor Nathaniel Dominy of Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H., recently wrote a scholarly paper on how the unique properties of reindeer eyes might explain the advantage of having a very shiny nose, particularly if it produces red light.

Reindeer eyes include reflective tissue that appears to glow when light hits it. In reindeer, the tissue changes from a golden colour during the summer to a deep blue in winter.

"What happens is that at night, the animals are trying to dilate their pupils to allow as much light into the eye as possible, and because those muscles are so active, it actually blocks little valves in the eye," Dominy explained. "The pressure in the eye builds up and compresses that tissue in the back of the eye, which causes the refractive properties to change."

While that change could boost an animal's ability to spot food in the snow when daylight in the Arctic is dim, it would be a distinct disadvantage on a foggy Christmas Eve because fog blocks blue light, Dominy said.

Enter the red nose.

Of all the colours, red light travels through fog fastest, making it ideal for guiding Santa's sleigh. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Migrants arrive on the Greek island of Lesbos on Nov. 2 after crossing the Aegean sea from Turkey's coast.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Over 1M migrated to Europe

REFUGEE CRISIS

The majority travelled by sea, say experts

More than one million people — driven out of their countries by war, poverty and persecution — entered Europe in this record-breaking year, migration experts said Tuesday, a symbolic milestone capping a mass movement of people that has challenged the concept of European unity.

With just days left in 2015, the Geneva-based International Organization for Migration said 1,005,504 people had entered Europe as of Monday, more than four times as many as last year. Almost all came by sea, while 3,692 others drowned trying to make the crossing.

IOM director-general William Lacy Swing urged European governments to make migration safer.

"We know migration is inevitable. It's necessary and it's desirable," he said, adding: "Migration must be legal, safe and secure for all — both for the migrants themselves and the countries that will become their new home."

The IOM compiles the numbers from government records in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Spain, Malta and Cyprus, spokesman Joel Millman said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

50%

About half of the people entering Europe were Syrians, while 20 per cent were Afghans and 7 per cent Iraqis, IOM said.

IN BRIEF

Students killed in shell attack on Syrian school

The Syrian government and an opposition monitoring group say that at least nine students have been killed and several wounded by a mortar shell that slammed into their school in the north-eastern city of Deir el-Zour.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.K. sends advisers to Afghan district under siege

Fierce battles were underway Tuesday between Afghan forces and the Taliban in Helmand province, where the insurgents have almost completely captured a strategic district as Britain deployed military advisers to the restive area. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WHISKEY WARS

Fireball lawsuit doused

Heated competition between producers of cinnamon whiskeys has cooled off, with Sazerac dropping its lawsuit against Jack Daniel's.



Jack Daniel's now sells a line of flavoured products. ISTOCK.COM

Sazerac — whose brands include the long-established Fireball Cinnamon Whisky — had accused its rival of trademark infringement by using the term "Fireball" in online advertising for cinnamon-flavoured Jack Daniel's Tennessee Fire. The legal fight ended quietly Monday when Sazerac filed a motion in federal court in Kentucky to voluntarily drop its claims.

Sazerac's motion did not say why it was dropping the case.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

market minute

DOLLAR 71.75¢ (+0.14¢)

TSX 13,082.86 (+48.48)

OIL $36.14 US (+33¢)

GOLD $1,074.10 US (–$6.50)

NATURAL GAS: $1.888 US (–2.3¢)
DOW JONES: 17,417.27 (+165.65)



POLLUTION ITALIAN CITIES STRUGGLE TO DEAL WITH SEASONAL SCOURGE Smoke billows from chimneys in Milan on Tuesday, adding to Italy's seasonal air pollution that has been worsened this year by long spells of no rain and little wind. Milan, joining efforts to battle pollution, is limiting the use of diesel cars and has asked residents to turn down thermostats by 1 degree while parents accompanying their children to and from Milan's schools can ride free on buses and trams. Meanwhile, Rome, as it has done several times this fall, is limiting the number of cars and motorcycles on its roads using a system based on license plates. And in northern Turin, public transport was free for two days this month to try to entice commuters away from cars.
LUCA BRUNO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ski resorts wait for snow

WINTER

Unlike in the east, white stuff piling up in the west

A reversal of fortunes is afoot in Canada as the snow continues to pile up at western Canadian ski resorts while the grass is still on display on slopes in the east.

The conditions are in contrast to the past couple of years when warm winters wreaked havoc at many western ski resorts while frigid and snowy conditions in the east ensured hills packed with skiers and snowboarders.

Blue Mountain ski resort in Collingwood, Ont., north of Toronto, was all set for a Nov. 27 start date, but the snow just didn't show up — and hasn't in other parts of Ontario and Quebec either.

"We were all ready for the 27th; nature was not," said Tara Lovell, public relations manager for the resort.

Blue Mountain has responded by reopening some of its summer activities like the rope course, zip line and climbing wall while still offering its usual holiday activities like live music, fireworks and wagon rides.

The conditions are in stark contrast to free-falling snow in the West.

"B.C. in general has had an unreal opening start," said Cynthia Thomas, communications manager for the Canada West Ski Areas Association.

> **We were all ready for the 27th; nature was not.**
> Tara Lovell of Blue Mountain ski resort in Ontario

The heavy snowfall is being welcomed at Mount Washington on Vancouver Island, which was forced to close early the past two seasons due to lack of snow.

"The conditions have just been outstanding," said Don Sharpe, director of business operations for the resort.

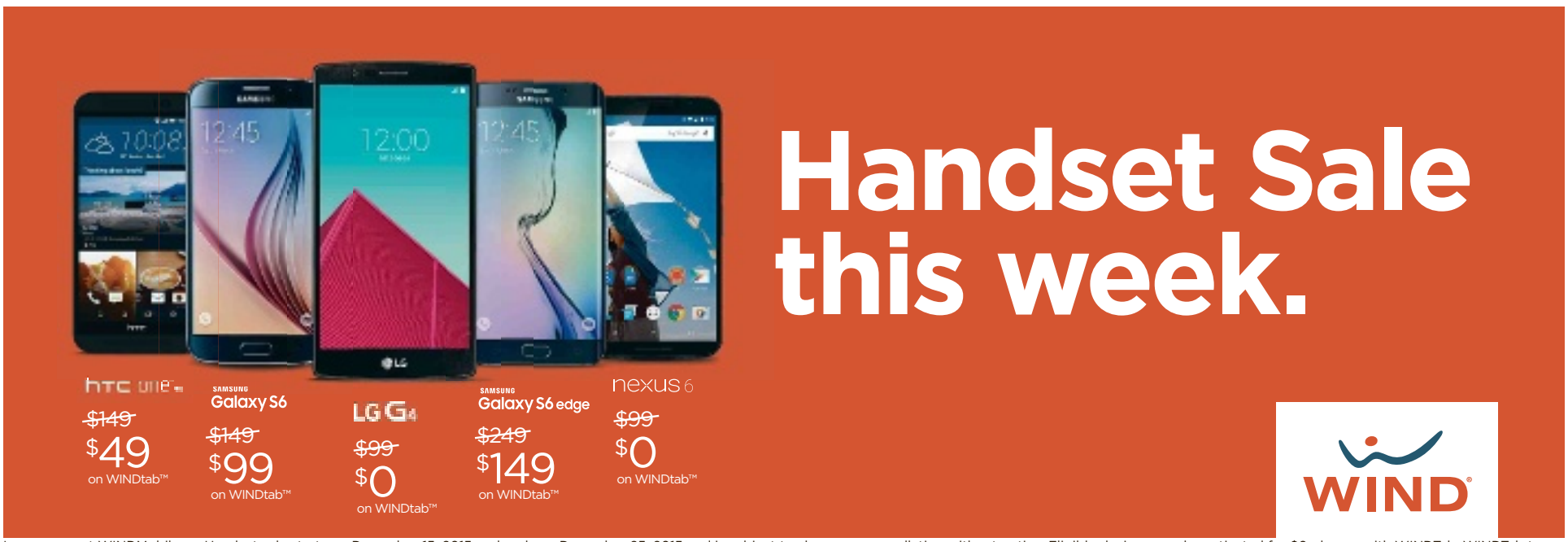
Mount Washington has already had over 300 centimetres of snow in December, allowing it to open its more technical terrain after a two-year hiatus and attract more skiers.

In the Rocky Mountains, the snow is also falling fast to the relief of resorts like Castle Mountain that were also forced to close early last year.

And so far, Alberta's economic downturn doesn't seem to have had an impact on the ski resorts, with Sunshine Village near Banff, Alta. showing a 10 to 15 per cent increase in ticket sales, says Lindsay Gallagher, marketing co-ordinator for the resort.

She said more Albertans are staying closer to home this season rather than travel for vacation, helping to boost season-pass sales. American travellers taking advantage of the low Canadian dollar are also helping to boost attendance.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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metro VIEWS
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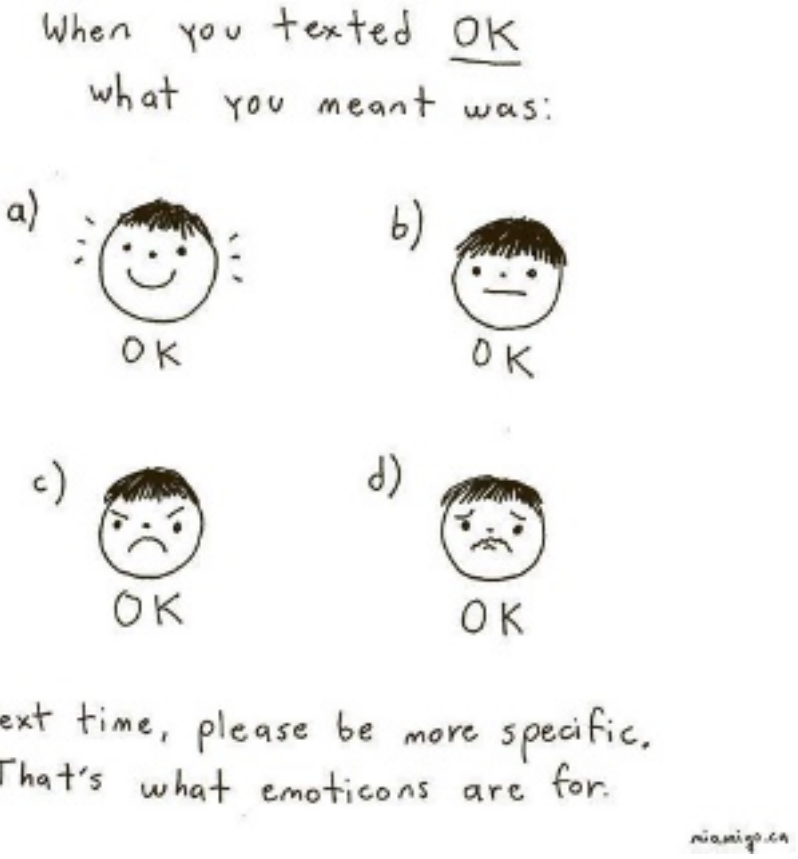
Cover your cough
Research shows this year's MERS virus outbreak in South Korea was due largely to "superspreaders" — social butterflies who infected up to 80 other people.

URBAN ETIQUETTE **ELLEN VANSTONE**



THE QUESTION

I say it's OK to use emoticons in emails. My mom says no way. What do you say? — :)



Dear Ellen,
I say it's OK to use emoticons in emails. My mom says no way. What do you say?
:), Vancouver

Dear :),

If you're sending an invitation to a karaoke birthday party, the more emoticons/emoji the better. But if you're submitting a resumé or student application, best to avoid them. Then again, if the place you're applying to is clown school, then yes, go emoticon go.

As with many matters of etiquette, it depends.

Personally, I have no problem with emoticons in emails, which (unlike image-based emoji) are made with letters and symbols and can be fun and creative. ^_^

In fact, I wish I'd learned to use :D and ;) and :) and :P years ago when email was new and people were forging the proper approach to online etiquette.

For famously rude old-school journalists, the cursory way we dealt with each other in person and on paper only got worse with electronic communication. Though fussy about spelling and punctuation in published articles, our emails were and still are sharp, direct and barely literate, because, you know, our time is so damn valuable. (Also, no one is paying us by the word in an email.)

For my non-journo friends, however, this "quick, efficient" approach was often perceived as "curt, rude and offensive." I've now learned that when a tight deadline or a long meeting does not permit sending a proper email, I can at least take the time to add a friendly smile or cheerful exclamation point to a one-word message in order to signal goodwill until I have more time to write or call.

An emoticon is most definitely recommended ... if there's any risk of misunderstanding.

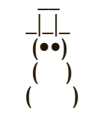
An emoticon is most definitely recommended if you can't resist jocularity and there's any risk of misunderstanding. The difference between "Thanks a lot, hate you too" and "Thanks a lot, hate you too ;P" is vast.

As for more elaborate emoticons, I usually steer clear. For one thing, they take too much shift-hunting and option-pecking on the keyboard. For another, they can be misconstrued. When you write, "Yes I did see the vicious reviews of my work on Twitter" and then add +_+ it's not really clear if the emoticon means "No comment" or "I am so freaked out, I got wasted and now I'm in a coma."

Finally, a word about image-based emoji. They're sometimes annoyingly inevitable, as when programs automatically translate your :) emoticon into a trademark happy face. And Google's decision to replace Gmail's retro emoji with grotesque yellow blobs is bewildering. But even those inelegant shapes can amuse when you're stuck on the bus, idly composing inane messages to close friends or small children.

In short, dear :) in Vancouver, when it comes to using emoticons or emoji in emails or elsewhere, use common sense, err on the side of respectful restraint and never, ever use them with your mom.

Happy holidays!



Need advice?
Email Ellen:
scene@metronews.ca

metroview

Here's how to stop Canada Post's slow-motion death march

R. Michael Warren



"We will stop Stephen Harper's plan to end door-to-door mail delivery in Canada and undertake a new review of Canada Post, to make sure it provides high-quality service at reasonable prices to Canadians, no matter where they live."

Of the hundreds of election promises made by Justin Trudeau, this one ranks among the most naive.

Ending home delivery for the one-third of Canadians who still receive it saves Canada Post more than $200 million a year. It's a key part of its $700-million Five Point Action Plan to make the corporation profitable.

The Liberals' "fully costed" campaign platform doesn't mention compensating Canada Post. It's as if the corporation can somehow lose $200 million in savings and not slide back into operating losses — covered by taxpayer subsidies.

The "new review" of Canada Post implies there is a silver bullet that will allow it to deliver fewer letters to a growing number of addresses at a reasonable price.

The Harper government allowed Canada Post to struggle for years with a "Transformation Plan" that failed to deliver the promised financial and service results.

It hired Moya Greene, an executive with privatization experience, to head up Canada Post in 2005. She proposed a gradual privatization. The corporation was profitable, debt free, worth about $1.5 billion and had a fully funded pension plan.

Harper failed to act when the conditions were most favourable. By 2013, Canada Post was bankrupt. Its pension plan was underfunded by $6.5 billion. (All these financial obligations are guaranteed by Canadian taxpayers.)

The Harper government said if Canada Post would implement the tough five-point plan, it would receive four years of relief from making up its pension deficit. This delays but doesn't reduce the obligation.

The plan relies on rate increases and savings from removing home delivery. With pension obligations temporarily lifted, it produced a short-term profit last year. But by the middle of this year, it was again facing losses.

So Canada Post may soon be looking to the government for subsidies to continue letter mail service, something Trudeau neglected to mention. Meanwhile, its pension deficit swelled to $6.8 billion.

Cheaper competitors can make money on all but remote rural routes. It's cheaper to pay them for this than to support Canada Post's monopoly. Canada Post should sell its 90 per cent, $1.5-$2-billion stake in Purolator and be privatized, with the proceeds going to its debt and pension shortfall.

Trudeau should end Canada Post's death spiral with real changes that should have been implemented years ago.

R. Michael Warren is a former corporate director, Ontario deputy minister, TTC chief general manager and Canada Post CEO.

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Savoury pies a winter delight

NEW COOKBOOK

This book of 100 recipes will warm your belly all season

Members of Team Pie will love Dinner Pies — a 100-recipe book devoted to savoury pies to get them through the winter.

Focusing on hearty meat- and root-vegetable-based pies presented as a full meal, Dinner Pies' ($36) first chapters are a primer of essential tools and ingredients for pie crusts, tips on rolling out the dough, and a dozen recipes for the crusts used throughout the book (sorry, no vegan options).

From there, about 100 recipes for savoury pot pies, hand pies, turnovers tarts, quiches, galettes, and cobblers fill the 269-page book. Classic pies — sausage and Guinness, Shepherd's pie and asparagus and goat cheese quiche are covered along with some more, ahem, American entries like Fritos chili pot pie, Tex Mex chicken tortilla pie and taco pot pie. You'll have to look at the author's previous books for the sweet pies.

Ken Haedrich is the man behind The Pie Academy website (thepieacademy.com), an online recipe hub and shop for all things pie-related. He's also written half a dozen other cookbooks centred on American comfort food (he is from North Carolina, after all).

The Curried Chicken is Haedrich's "favourite chicken pot pie recipe."

Curried Chicken Pot Pie

There's enough filling here to make three or four individually sized pies. Cover extra filling with aluminum foil and store in fridge for an easily reheated dinner. The curry adds aromatics but not much heat, so if you want it spicy, add 1 tsp cayenne.

Ingredients

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
- 1 cup finely chopped white onion
- 1 1/2 cup peeled and finely diced carrot
- 1 cup finely diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp mild curry powder
- 1 3/4 cups no-salt added chicken broth
- 1 1/4 cups whole milk or half-and-half
- 1 cup canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1/3 cup canned pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)
- 1/2 tsp table salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 large egg beaten with 1 Tbsp whole milk or half-and-half (to brush on top of pie crust)

Directions

Bring a medium-sized pot of water to a rapid boil over medium-high heat. Add chicken breasts and cook until no longer pink in middle, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Let cool to room temperature and dice into small cubes. Set aside.

Melt butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, carrot and pepper. Cook until vegetables soften, 10 minutes.

Add flour and curry powder. Stir, 1 minute. Add chicken broth slowly, stirring frequently to dissolve curry powder and flour. When broth thickens, add milk. Continue to cook at a slow simmer another 3 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent burning.

Stir in chicken, chickpeas, peas and pumpkin puree. Add salt and pepper. Taste. Adjust seasoning as needed. Continue cooking until the liquid in the pot becomes a thick gravy.

If making more than one pot pie, divide the filling into oven-safe ramekins or small pans that can each hold about 1 to 1 1/4 cups of filling. Make sure to leave a bit of room for the pie crust on top. Set aside.

Divide the pie dough ball into the number of pie pans you are using. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each dough ball with a lightly floured rolling pin until the dough is slightly bigger than the diameter of the pie pan. Drape the flattened dough over the top of the pan, pressing any extra dough on to the side of the pan to seal the pie. Using a fork or a knife, poke two or three holes in the centre of the crust. Repeat for the other pies.

Lightly brush the dough with the egg mixture.

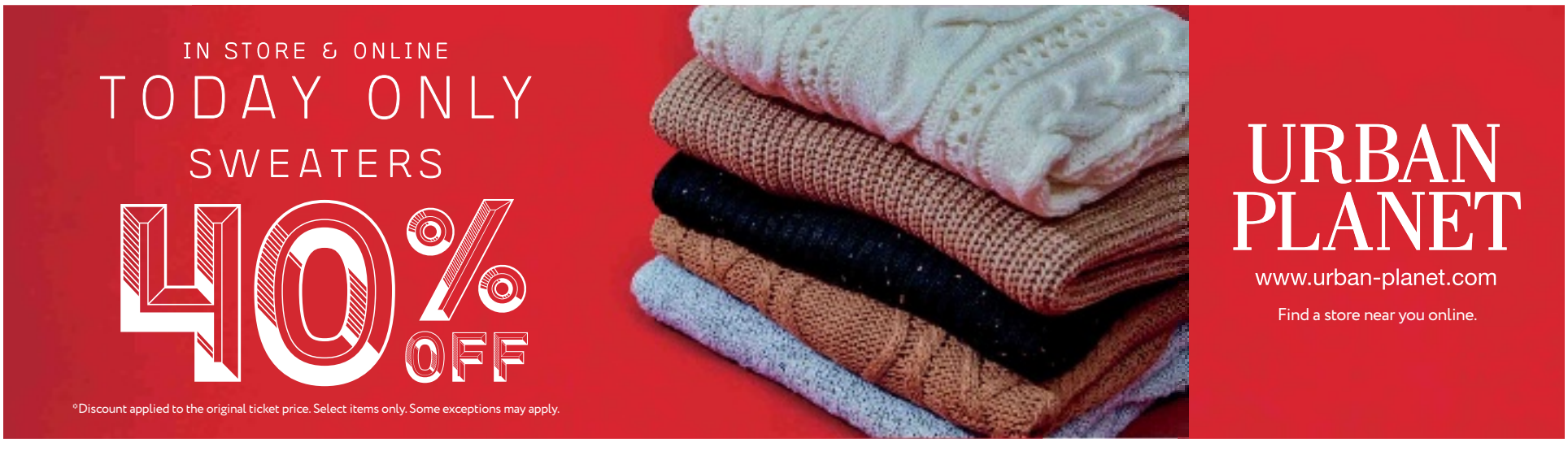
Place the pot pies on an unlined baking sheet in the oven. Bake at 375 F for 35 to 45 minutes, until crust is golden-brown and filling is bubbling hot. Place on a cooling rack for at least 15 minutes before serving.

Makes 4 servings.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



This curried chicken pot pie is The Pie Academy's Ken Haedrich's favourite chicken pot pie recipe. CONTRIBUTED



SEASON RECAP

Fargo series took on a life of its own

Fargo's second season is over, but many of us remain mesmerized by it, as if we were flat on our backs staring up at a UFO.

In the midst of the TV industry's creative and cultural peak, the Calgary-produced show slipped onto the scene and quietly, steadily propelled itself up critics' best-of lists.

The first season of creator Noah Hawley's anthology for FX was tremendous in its own right — it effortlessly shrugged off any expectations viewers had in connection with Joel and Ethan Coen's iconic 1996 film — but Fargo's second season is even better.

Fargo succeeded by using snippets of multiple dramatic constructs to assemble a first-rate, postmodern pastiche that felt familiar and fresh all at once.

In Season 1, Hawley wove elements of the Fargo movie into his plot, paying homage to the Coen Bros.' genius at nearly every turn.

To help give the TV version of Fargo a life of its own, Hawley created unforgettable standalone roles in Season 2 with no connection to the tale that preceded it.

Each had a crucial place in the plot's house of cards; never did you get the sense (as you did in True Detective's second season) that scenes had to be divided equally among the major stars. Instead, you can't imagine Season 2 of Fargo without any of them.

The end result of Hawley's brilliant splicing process intentionally blurred the lines between the movie and the first two seasons — a third season is scheduled for the spring of 2017 — and between objective and subjective reality.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Kirsten Dunst in Fargo. HANDOUT

JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

Show exposes incompetence

THE SHOW: Making a Murderer, Episode Four (Netflix)

Brendan Dassey, a 16-year-old boy with an IQ of 75, phones his mother from prison in Manitowoc County, Wisc. He's just confessed that he and his uncle, Steven Avery, raped and murdered photographer Teresa Hallbach.

"I didn't do it, though," he tells his mother (Avery's sister). "But why did you say it if you didn't do it?" she cries, audibly panicked. "I guessed," Brendan says. "Like I guess at my homework."

You might want to watch this true-crime series behind closed doors, because I guarantee you will be yelling at your screen. It follows Avery's case over a ten-year period. The gross incompetence it exposes — of the police, lawyers, and judges — is breathtaking, and the degree to which they manipulate people and facts is deeply troubling.

Making a Murderer feeds the appetite for true crime stories evinced by the huge successes of the podcast Serial and HBO's miniseries The Jinx: The Lives and Deaths of Robert Durst.

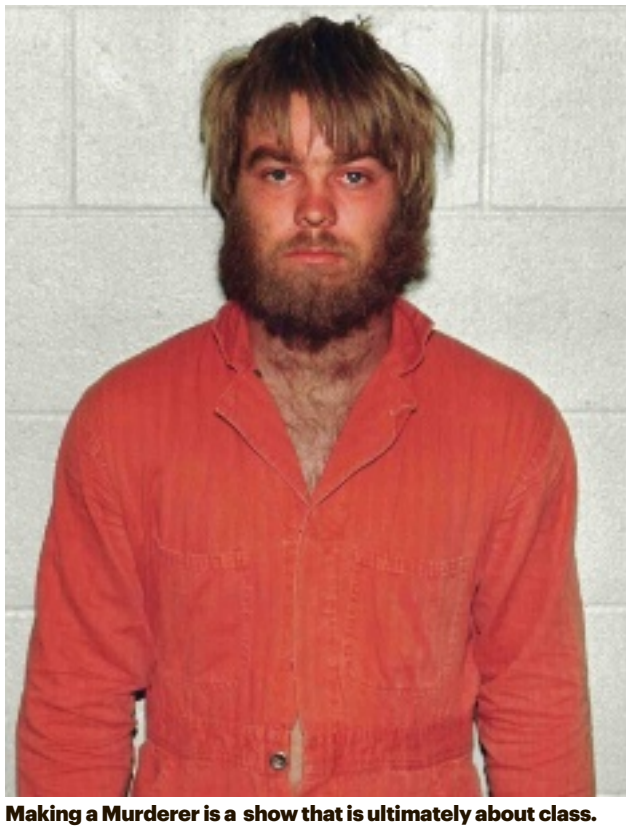
If the first season of the former was about race in America

> **You might want to watch this true-crime series behind closed doors, because I guarantee you will be yelling at your screen.**

(the second season just started), and the latter about money, Making a Murderer is about class. Avery's family owns an auto salvage business (much of the voiceover is accompanied by shots of rusting cars). They're undereducated (his mother calls newsmagazine shows, "Them things that's on TV always"). His girlfriend is in and out of prison for drunk driving. Seeing what easy targets they are will make you queasy.

"Poor people lose," Avery sums up. "They lose all the time."

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.



Making a Murderer is a show that is ultimately about class. CONTRIBUTED



HOTLINE BLING

Director X's surprise success

Through the seemingly endless stream of parodies and fan adulation for Drake's viral Hotline Bling video, perhaps no one has been more surprised by its success than its Toronto director.

"It was incredible," said Director X (real name Julien Christian Lutz) of the reaction to video, which has surpassed 245 million views.

"I was really blown away. I didn't expect it to be so big. It's crazy."

X, as he's often referred to, has been directing videos for some of the world's biggest recording artists for 20 years now. They include Kendrick Lamar, Usher, Justin Bieber, Nicki Minaj, Timbaland, Jay-Z, Alicia Keys and John Mayer, to name but a few.

He's also getting into big-screen projects and is directing his second feature film,Center Stage 3: Dance Camp.

He shot Hotline Bling through his production company, Creative Soul, in Toronto in September. It was his third time working with Drake after Worst Behaviour and Started from the Bottom.

"He's a great collaborator," said X. "He definitely knows what he wants and even has an understanding of what's going to work. It's a good experience working with him.

"It's good to be working with someone that's more of a partner than just some guy who shows up and then stands in front of the camera and leaves," X continued.

"He's involved, top to bottom, beginning to end. He's not leaving anything for someone else to figure out for him."

Hotline Bling, which debuted in late October, has become a sensation, largely because of Drake's slow body-roll dancing in it.

But it was X's artistic vision that emphasized the moves.

The video starts with a shot of curvaceous women working in a cubicle-divided call centre. It then cuts to Drake (whose real name is Aubrey Graham) doing a series of shimmy-shuffle grooves on a minimalistic, illuminated set featuring light boxes and stairs.

Overall, the goal was "just doing a big performance piece," said X, noting he was asked to do something along the lines of his Temperature video for Sean Paul. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Brampton, Ont., native Director X got his start as an intern at MuchMusic in the mid-'90s. COURTESY DIRECTOR X/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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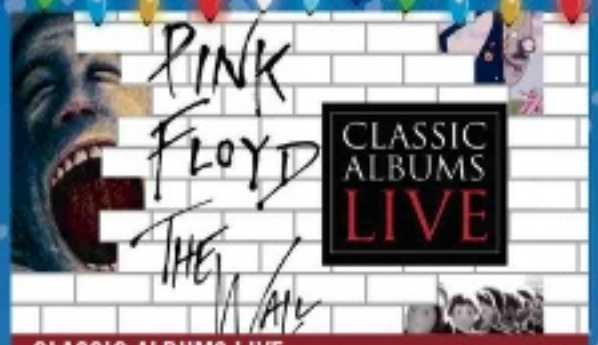
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Wise customers read the fine print: †, ◊, •, ➢, ††, ♦, ‡, », ≈, *, § The Be Your Own Santa offers are limited time offers which apply to retail deliveries of selected in-stock new and unused models purchased/leased from participating retailers between December 21 and 31, 2015. Offers subject to change and may be extended or changed without notice. All pricing includes freight ($1,745), air-conditioning charge (if applicable), tire levy and OMVIC fee. Pricing excludes licence, insurance, registration, any retailer administration fees, other retailer charges and other applicable fees and taxes. Financing and lease offers available to qualified customers on approved credit. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may sell for less. †0% purchase financing for up to 72 months available on select new 2016 models to qualified customers on approved credit through RBC, Scotiabank and TD Auto Finance. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Examples: 2016 Ram 1500 Quad Cab SXT 4x4 (25A+AGR)/2016 Ram 1500 Crew Cab SXT 4x4 (25A+AGR)/2016 Cherokee North 4x4 (26J+ADE+AFB+RC3)/2016 Dodge Grand Caravan SXT (29E)/2016 Dodge Journey SXT (29E) with a Purchase Price of $28,368/$31,867/$32,538/$25,323/$26,850 with a $0 down payment, financed at 0% for 60/60/72/72/36 months equals 130/130/156/156/78 bi-weekly payments of $218/$245/$209/$162/$344 with a cost of borrowing of $0 and a total obligation of $28,368/$31,867/$32,538/$25,323/$26,850. ◊$11,000 in Total Discounts is available on new 2016 Ram 1500 models (excluding Reg Cab) and consists of $7,500 in Consumer Cash Discounts, $1,500 in Ram Truck Loyalty/Conquest Bonus Cash and $2,000 Holiday Bonus Cash. See your retailer for complete details. •Up to $2,000 Holiday Bonus Cash is available between December 21 and 31, 2015, on most new 2016 Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram and FIAT models excluding the following: 2016 Chrysler 200, Dodge Grand Caravan CVP, Journey CVP/SE Plus, Durango, Charger SRT Hellcat, Challenger SRT Hellcat, Viper and Jeep Grand Cherokee models. Bonus Cash will be deducted from the negotiated price after taxes. See your retailer for complete details. ➢3.49% purchase financing for up to 96 months available on select new 2016 models through RBC, Scotiabank and TD Auto Finance. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Examples: 2016 Ram 1500 Quad Cab SXT 4x4 (25A+AGR)/2016 Jeep Cherokee Sport FWD (24A) with a Purchase Price of $28,368/$25,175 with a $998/$0 down payment, financed at 3.49% for 96 months equals 208 bi-weekly payments of $151/$139 with a cost of borrowing of $4,038/$3,714 and a total obligation of $32,405.94/$28,889.11. ††2.99% purchase financing for up to 96 months available on select new 2016 models through RBC, Scotiabank and TD Auto Finance. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Examples: 2016 Cherokee North 4x4 (26J+ADE+AFB+RC3) with a Purchase Price of $32,538 with a $0 down payment, financed at 2.99% for 96 months equals 208 bi-weekly payments of $176 with a cost of borrowing of $4,087 and a total obligation of $36,624.87. ♦Save the Freight offer applies to specially marked 2016 Jeep Cherokee North 4x4 (26J+ADE+AFB+RC3) and 2016 Jeep Cherokee Limited 4x4 (26G+AFF+AHT+RC3) models only. Offer available at participating Ontario retailers, while quantities last. ‡3.99% purchase financing for up to 96 months available on select new 2016 models through RBC, Scotiabank and TD Auto Finance. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Examples: 2016 Dodge Grand Caravan Canada Value Package (29E)/2016 Dodge Journey Canada Value Package (22F) with a Purchase Price of $20,995/$20,150 with a $0 down payment, financed at 3.99% for 96 months equals 208 bi-weekly payments of $118/$113 with a cost of borrowing of $3,563/$3,420 and a total obligation of $24,558.35/$23,569.94. »$1,500 Ram Truck Loyalty/Conquest/Skilled Trades Bonus Cash is available on the retail purchase/lease of 2015/2016 Ram 1500 (excludes Regular Cab), 2014/2015/2016 Ram 2500/3500/Cab & Chassis, or 2015 Ram Cargo Van and is deducted from the negotiated price after taxes. Eligible customers include: 1. Current owners/lessees of a Dodge or Ram Pickup Truck or Large Van or any other manufacturer's Pickup Truck or Large Van. The vehicle must have been owned/leased by the eligible customer and registered in their name on or before December 1, 2015. Proof of ownership/lease agreement will be required. 2. Customers who are skilled tradesmen or are acquiring a skilled trade. This includes Licensed Tradesmen, Certified Journeymen or customers who have completed Apprenticeship Certification. A copy of the Trade Licence/Certification required. 3. Customers who are Baeumler Approved service providers. Proof of membership is required. Limit one $1,500 bonus cash offer per eligible truck transaction. Some conditions apply. See your retailer for complete details. ≈Non-prime financing available on select models on approved credit. 6.99% financing available on select 2015/2016 models. Financing example: 2016 Dodge Grand Caravan Canada Value Package with a Purchase Price of $20,995 financed at 6.99% over 84 months, equals 182 bi-weekly payments of $146 with a cost of borrowing of $5,614 and a total finance obligation of $26,608.53. Some conditions apply. See your retailer for complete details. *Consumer Cash Discounts are deducted from the negotiated price before taxes. §Starting From Prices for vehicles shown include Consumer Cash Discounts and do not include upgrades (e.g., paint). Upgrades available for additional cost. ∞Based on 2014 *Ward's* Middle Cross Utility segmentation. ^Based on IHS Automotive: Polk Canadian Vehicles in Operation data available as of July, 2014 for Crossover Segments as defined by FCA Canada Inc. ®Jeep is a registered trademark of FCA US LLC used under license by FCA Canada Inc. ™The SiriusXM logo is a registered trademark of SiriusXM Satellite Radio Inc.

metro DRIVE

Your essential daily news



Vauxhall Astra of Top Gear fame being sold on eBay for charity

It ain't heavy, it's the Tahoe



REVIEW

Quick steering response makes Chevy SUV feel much smaller

Jil McIntosh
For Metro Canada



Between gas prices, congestion and parking woes, full-size SUVs don't have the cachet they once did. But there's still a place for them, and so GM has completely redesigned its Chevrolet Tahoe and Suburban.

The two are essentially the same, but the Suburban rides on a longer wheelbase, with more legroom and cargo space. The 2015 models got the update, while the 2016 versions are unchanged except for some trim items.

I drove the Tahoe. Like the Suburban, it uses a 5.3-litre V8 as before, but this is a new version that, at 355 horsepower, is more powerful than the 320-horse version it replaces. It comes in two- or four-wheel drive, and when properly equipped, it can tow up to 3,856 kg (8,500 lbs), an important factor in a vehicle that many people buy in place of a truck.

For all its bulk, and it is big, the Tahoe doesn't feel heavy. Much of that has to do with its quick steering response, which makes it feel like you're piloting something much smaller. The cabin is extremely quiet, and the strong engine accelerates swiftly and smoothly when power is needed. Its fuel economy will seem high if you're accustomed to a smaller crossover, but its published figures are the best of its competitors.

The interior is handsome, and the first- and second-row seats are comfortable, but the third row is another story. Perched above the rear axle, these flat-cushioned chairs are close to the floor and leave you sitting with your chin on your knees. Unless you have small children, or friends desperate for a ride, you'll probably keep them folded down to give you more cargo space.

Available in three trim lines, the Tahoe also offers a number of option packages that add some nice features but also can get pricey. My mid-range LT trim was optioned to more than $68,400, but still didn't have a navigation system. That said, for those in the market for a full-size SUV, Chevrolet's redesigned version is very well done and worthy of a look.

Its fuel economy will seem high if you're accustomed to a smaller crossover, but its published figures are the best of its competitors.

THE CHECKLIST | 2016 CHEVROLET TAHOE

THE BASICS

Type. Four-door, 7- or 8-passenger full-size SUV
Engine (hp/torque). 5.3-litre V8 (355/383)
Transmission. Six-speed automatic
Price. $52,740 (base), $68,435 (tested), plus destination

COOL FEATURES

- Wireless phone charging
- Heated steering wheel
- Heated and cooled front seats
- Rain-sensing wipers
- Adaptive cruise control
- Front collision warning with automatic braking
- Tri-zone automatic climate control



JIL MCINTOSH/FOR METRO; MAIN: COURTESY GM

POINTS

- The GMC Yukon and Yukon XL are the mechanical twins to the Tahoe and Suburban, but slightly more upscale and pricier.
- The 5.3-litre V8 uses active fuel management, which shuts off fuel to half the cylinders when full power isn't needed for better efficiency.
- If the lane departure system notices you drifting out of your lane, it vibrates the seat as a warning.

MARKET POSITION

Large SUVs are a niche market, but can be popular with those who need passenger and cargo space while towing boats or trailers. GM and Ford are the only mainstream companies to offer one model in two different lengths.

THE COMPETITION



Ford Expedition
Base price: $52,399



Dodge Durango
Base price: $41,895



Toyota Sequoia
Base price: $54,535

TECH TRADE SHOW

Automotive presence to be bigger than ever at 2016 CES

In recent years the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas has been reenergized as an event for providing consumers with a peek into the automotive world of the future and at this year's show, which runs Jan. 6 to 9, 2016, a new record is expected in terms of the number of automakers in attendance.

Aston Martin

It can still compete in terms of esthetics, but in every other department, James Bond's automotive brand of choice is slipping further and further behind the competition. However, all of that is expected to change in the year ahead, starting with CES where the company is tipped to present its first connected car concept.

Audi

No stranger to the event, or to wowing the crowds with autonomous technology, Audi is tipped to unveil a new flagship A8 luxury sedan complete with a production-ready version of its piloted driving and remote parking systems.

Rinspeed

The Swiss design studio is showing an autonomous car concept called the Etos. Based on the BMW i8 it even has its own drone that can take to the sky to check out the road ahead or be sent out for pizza when stuck in traffic.

Bosch

One of the most intriguing of the German automotive supplier's showcases will be a crowd-sourced take on finding a parking space. "With the help of sensors, cars identify and measure the gaps between parked cars as they drive past them. The information they record is transferred to a digital road map," explains Gerhard Steiger, president of the Bosch Chassis Systems Control division.

Continental

The tire maker and component supplier will be giving real-world demonstrations of its Dynamic eHorizon connected car platform that, in Continental's own words, lets you see around the corner. "Predictive driving is safe driving. This is what any driver learns in driving school," said Ralf Lenninger, head of Innovation, System Development and Strategy.

Volkswagen

Rumours are flying that a new car based on its iconic Microbus will be unveiled in Las Vegas; however, all VW will say is that it will be a "completely new concept car" and that it will mark "the beginning of a new era of affordable long-distance electromobility."

AFP



Rumour has it a new car based on Volkswagen's iconic Microbus will be unveiled.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

Taking the Tucson FCEV out for a spin

AUTOPILOT

Zero-emissions vehicle now on the streets of Surrey, B.C.

Mike Goetz
For Metro Canada



Last week I drove an example of the first fuel-cell vehicle to go on sale in Canada.

The first jolt was that the Hyundai Tucson FCEV looks alarmingly like any other 2013 to 2015 Tucson.

Your brain expects a car that runs on a chemical process (expressed in very long and complicated formulas) to turn hydrogen into electricity to not look like the compact SUV you rented two years ago at the airport.

Hyundai Canada's communications manager, Chad Heard, opens the FCEV's hatch to show me the cargo floor, which is about two inches higher than that of a regular Tucson, because underneath is the bigger of the two hydrogen storage tanks (the other, smaller tank is under the passenger seat). The FCEV's tanks are rated at 10,000 psi, and hold enough hydrogen for about 420 kilometres.

"This is where the magic happens," Heard says next, after lifting the front hood. Hyundai's proprietary Fuel Cell, which turns hydrogen into electricity, is completely housed in the engine bay. It's a tight fit, but it's all in there. Also packed in is a 25kW battery for storing electricity, an electric motor capable of 134 hp and 221 lb-ft of torque,



The Hyundai Tucson FCEV looks like a regular Tucson ... until you open it up. ALL PHOTOS BY MIKE GOETZ/FOR METRO

and a transaxle connecting the motor to the front wheels.

Then Heard throws me the key, and we climb in for a short drive and lunch … much like an episode of Jerry Seinfeld's Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee, but without the comedy and the star power and the thousands of views. And the fact that we're driving THE FUTURE, and not an emissions-belching old-timey sports car.

I hit the start button. The instruments come to life and that's about it. No powertrain sounds, so just like a "regular" EV or hybrid. If it was cold outside it would take a bit for the Fuel Cell to get working, but you could take off even before it is, via battery power.

I shift into drive. Off we go …

It drives just like virtually any electric vehicle, with seamless, smooth and silent propulsion. The loudest sound is the heater fan, and tire noise.

You can't hear or sense what the Fuel Cell is doing — powering the motor, charging the battery, or both, or simply on stand-by to conserve hydrogen. It just does its own thing.

Good acceleration around town. It gets up to highway speeds no problem, but feels a bit slow over 100 km/h.

The FCEV is a good chunk heavier than a regular Tucson, and most of the extra weight is all up-front, so that affects the handling somewhat.

But once you adjust to its nature, you can easily forget you're driving a hydrogen-powered vehicle with zero emissions. If our hydrogen future is on hold for some reason, it is not because driving a fuel-cell car is a substandard experience. It's a great experience.

The Tucson is only available as a three-year lease, at $529 a month, which also includes free hydrogen and all your maintenance. Eight of them have been leased so far, and only in the Surrey, B.C., area, home to Canada's only publicly accessed hydrogen refuelling station and a dealership trained and equipped for fuel-cell vehicles.

Lots more want one, but Hyundai has to make sure the fuel-cell experience will be a good one for prospective buyers, so for now, that effectively means only customers in that area of the country. Which is kind of a shame …



Under the hood, the proprietary Fuel Cell in the engine bay.



In the rear, the bigger of the two hydrogen storage tanks.

AUTOTRADER'S PICKS

Lights, camera: Forecasting the must-have car tech options

Autotrader has been crunching the data, going through the options lists and examining historical consumer sentiment in order to put together its guide to the best options to select if buying a new car in the year ahead.

Buying a new car has never been easier. BMW's new web portal, for instance, can take care of the whole process in just 10 minutes, all from the comfort of your living room.

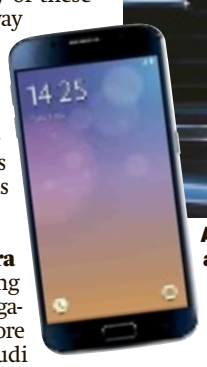
However, the lists and array of optional equipment and features, even on the most mass-market cars, have never been longer or more complex and it's often impossible to know what is worth the investment.

"All of the major automakers are racing to integrate the latest and greatest features into their vehicles," said Brian Moody, executive editor at Autotrader.

"The last several years have seen great advances in automotive technology, from features that keep drivers safer to some that make the car infinitely more entertaining to drive. And in 2016, we'll see many of these features make their way into a wider variety of vehicles."

To clear up the confusion, Autotrader has curated a list of the features that it believes will be the best options to pick in a 2016 car.





A 360-degree camera monitoring system, such as that found in the 2016 Kia Sorento, and better smartphone integration are among the tech features car shoppers may want to keep an eye on in the new year. KATHY RENWALD/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE; INSET: ISTOCK

A 360-degree camera

In the U.S., a reversing camera is already obligatory, but more and more companies, from Audi to Nissan, are now taking the technology to another level by offering virtual all-round or bird's-eye views of the car's surroundings for missing any obstacle when reversing.

Self-parking

All mainstream motor manufacturers now have a self-parking system as standard or optional equipment that can cope with both perpendicular and parallel spaces. It is faster and more reliable than most humans, and is already one of the most commonly specified features for European car buyers.

Automatic steering

Autotrader is using this as an umbrella term for a number of different lane-keeping, traffic jam assist and highway-piloting systems that are beginning to trickle down from concept to production. According to Bosch's figures, lane-keeping features alone are enough to prevent up to 28 per cent of accidents resulting in injury caused by poor lane discipline.

LED headlamps

They look cool but they also do a better job of illuminating the road than any other current-generation headlamp technology. On Audis, Mercedes and now even the latest Fords, the LEDs can automatically refocus so as not to dazzle oncoming drivers, shine around the car ahead and even bend to brighten a corner before steering into it.

Smartphone integration

Consumers want access to apps and other smartphone services while behind the wheel and they prefer the systems on their handsets to the ones that car companies are offering. Therefore, better smartphone integration, via Android Auto or Apple CarPlay, is going to be a true must-have for anyone that wants hands-free calling and turn-by-turn navigation. AFP

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WITH **$1,195** DOWN PAYMENT



TITANIUM MODEL SHOWN



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Shelby and 50th Anniversary), Transit Connect, F-150 SuperCab XL and 2016 Escape, F-250 Gas Engine models for up to 72 months, or 2015 Focus (excluding BEV) and 2016 Fusion models for up to 84 months to qualified retail customers, on approved credit (OAC) from Ford Credit Canada Limited. Not all buyers will qualify for the lowest interest rate. Example: $25,000 purchase financed at 0% APR for 48/60/72/84 months, monthly payment is $520.84/$416.67/$347.22/$297.62, cost of borrowing is $0 or APR of 0% and total to be repaid is $25,000. Down payment on purchase financing offers may be required based on approved credit from Ford Credit Canada Limited. ††Until January 4, 2016, lease a new 2016 Ford Escape SE / Escape Titanium for up to 60 months, and get 0.99% LAPR on approved credit (OAC) from Ford Credit. Not all buyers will qualify for the lowest APR payment. Lease a 2016 Ford Escape/Escape Titanium with a value of $27,144/$36,689 after $1,195/$0 down payment or equivalent trade in at 0.99% LAPR for up 60 months with an optional buyout of $10,202/$13,575, monthly payment is $239/$407 (the sum of twelve (12) monthly payments divided by 26 periods gives payee a bi-weekly payment of $138/$188), total lease obligation is $19,135/$24,420, interest cost of leasing is $921/$1,239 or 0.99% LAPR. Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price after Manufacturer Rebates have been deducted. Offers include freight, air tax, and PPSA but exclude administration and registration fees of up to $799, fuel fill charge of up to $120 and all applicable taxes. Additional payments required for optional features, license, and insurance. All prices are based on Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. Some conditions and mileage restriction of 80,000 km for 60 months (16,000 km per year) applies. Excess kilometrage charges are 12¢ per km, plus applicable taxes. Excess kilometrage charges subject to change, see your local dealer for details. ‡Until January 4, 2016, receive 0% APR purchase financing on new 2015 Focus SE / Focus Titanium, Fusion SE FWD/Fusion Titanium models for up to 84 months, to qualified retail customers, on approved credit (OAC) from Ford Credit. Not all buyers will qualify for the lowest interest rate. 2015 Focus SE / Focus Titanium / 2016 Fusion SE FWD / 2016 Fusion Titanium for $21,362/$27,164/$26,099/$34,999 (with $0 down payment) purchase financed at 0% APR for 84 months, monthly payment is $255/$324/$311/$417 (the sum of twelve (12) monthly payments divided by 26 periods gives payee a bi-weekly payment of $118/$150/$144/$193), interest cost of borrowing is $0 or APR of 0%, and total to be repaid is $21,362/$27,164 /$26,099/$34,999. Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price after Manufacturer Rebates have been deducted. Offers include freight and air tax charges but exclude fuel fill charge of up to $120 and all applicable taxes. All prices are based on Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. *Purchase a new 2015 Focus SE / 2015 Focus Titanium / 2016 Fusion SE FWD/2016 Fusion Titanium for $23,364/$27,164 $26,099/$34,999 after Manufacturer Rebates of $750 deducted. Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price after Manufacturer Rebates have been deducted. Offers include freight and air tax charges but exclude administration and registration fees of up to $799, fuel fill charge of up to $120 and all applicable taxes. All prices are based on Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. ¥Offer only valid from November 3, 2015 to January 4, 2016 (the "Offer Period"), to resident Canadians with an eligible Costco membership on or before October 31, 2015. Receive $1,000 towards the purchase or lease of a new 2015/2016 Ford (excluding Fiesta, Focus, C-MAX, GT350, GT500, F-150 Raptor, 50th Anniversary Edition Mustang, Mustang Shelby, 350/350R and Medium Truck) model (each an "Eligible Vehicle"). Limit one (1) offer per each Eligible Vehicle purchase or lease, up to a maximum of two (2) separate Eligible Vehicle sales per Costco Membership Number. Offer is transferable to persons domiciled with an eligible Costco member. Applicable taxes calculated before CAD$1,000, offer is deducted. ‡Offer valid between December 11, 2015 and January 4, 2016 (the "Offer Period") to Canadian residents. Receive $500 (on 2016 model years) or $750 (on 2015 model years) towards the purchase or lease of a new Ford Fusion, Mustang (excluding 50th Anniversary Edition and Shelby), Taurus, Flex, Escape, Expedition, Transit Connect, E-Series Cutaway, Transit Van/Wagon, Transit Cutaway/Chassis Cab, F-150, F-250 to F-550, (all F-150 Raptor models excluded) (each an "Eligible Vehicle"). Only one (1) bonus offer may be applied towards the purchase or lease of one (1) Eligible Vehicle. Taxes payable before offer amount is deducted. Offer is not rainchreckable. Contest closes December 15, 2015. Skill-testing question required. Prize may not be exactly as shown. See dealer for full contest rules. ©2015 Sirius Canada Inc. "SiriusXM", the SiriusXM logo, channel names and logos are trademarks of SiriusXM Radio Inc. and are used under licence. ®: Registered trademark of Price Costco International, Inc. used under license. ©2015 Ford Motor Company of Canada, Limited. All rights reserved.

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GT models shown





GT model shown

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THE CAR GUIDE

Best New SUV of the Year
2016 MAZDA CX-3

2016 Best Buys

Compact Category
2016 MAZDA3

Compact SUV under $40,000
2016 MAZDA CX-5

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STANDARD ON ALL 2015 AND 2016 MODELS.

DRIVING MATTERS

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†0% APR Purchase Financing is available on select new 2015 and 2016 Mazda models. Terms vary by model. Based on a representative agreement using an offered pricing of $17,400 for the new 2016 Mazda3 G (D4GK66AA00) with a financed amount of $18,000, the cost of borrowing for a 36-month term is $0, monthly payment is $500, total finance obligation is $18,000. Offer includes freight and P.D.E. of $1,695, $10 OMVIC fee, and $23.75 Tire Stewardship Fee. Offer excludes HST. ▼Limited one iPad mini 4 per retail customer on finance, lease or cash purchase of all new 2015/2016 Mazda models between December 1, 2015 and January 4, 2016. No substitutions or cash surrender value. iPad is a trademark of Apple Inc. All rights reserved. Apple is not a sponsor of, nor a participant in, this promotion. See dealer for complete details. ‡Offer available on retail leases of new 2016 Mazda3 G (D4GK66AA00)/2016 CX-3 GX (HVXK86AA00)/2016 CX-5 GX (NVXK66AA00) with a lease APR of 1.49%/3.49%/1.69% and 104/130/130 bi-weekly payments of $88/$125/$129 for 48/60/60 months, the total lease obligation is $9,204/$17,087/$17,601, including down payment (or equivalent trade-in) of $0/$895/$895. As shown, Offered Pricing for new 2016 Mazda3 GT (D4TL66AA00)/2016 CX-3 GT (HXTK86AA00)/2016 CX-5 GT (NXTL86AA00) with a lease APR of 1.49%/3.49%/1.69% and 104/130/130 bi-weekly payments of $161/$176/$191 for 48/60/60 months, the total lease obligation is $16,734/$23,797/$25,668, including down payment (or equivalent trade-in) of $0/$895/$895. Lease payments include freight and P.D.E. of $1,695/$1,895/$1,895, $10 OMVIC fee (all models), $23.75 Tire Stewardship Fee (all models), and $100 Air Conditioning charge (where applicable). PPSA of $75.28/$90.95/$90.95 and first monthly payment are due at lease inception. 20,000 km per year mileage allowance applies; if exceeded, additional 8¢ per km applies (12¢ per km for CX-9 models). Offers exclude HST. Offered leasing available to retail customers only. *To learn more about the Mazda Unlimited Warranty, go to mazdaunlimited.ca. Licence, insurance, taxes and down payment (where applicable) are extra and may be required at the time of purchase. Dealer may sell/lease for less. Dealer order/trade may be necessary on certain vehicles. Offers valid December 1, 2015 – January 4, 2016, while supplies last. Lease and finance on approved credit for qualified customers only. Offers subject to change without notice. Visit mazda.ca or see your dealer for complete details.

metro SPORTS



Former Tampa Bay coach doesn't expect the Steven Stamkos hysteria to die down soon: 'It's big because Stammer's big'

5 CANADIANS TO WATCH IN FINLAND

The world junior hockey championship begins on Saturday with Canada facing the United States in the preliminary round. Here are five Canadian players to keep an eye on starting on Boxing Day:

JAKE VIRTANEN

Right-winger, New Westminster, B.C.

Virtanen rode his success with last year's world junior champions on to the Vancouver Canucks roster, officially making the NHL team on Nov. 1 as a 19-year-old rookie. Since that impressive start to the season he's struggled with one goal and four assists in 19 games. He went scoreless in two games while on a conditioning assignment with the American Hockey League's Utica Comets before joining Canada's junior team. He could be a leader in the Canadian locker-room but also has the opportunity to turn around his season in the NHL.

2015-16 stats (Vancouver Canucks, NHL)

GP	G	A	+/-	PIM
19	1	3	-3	15

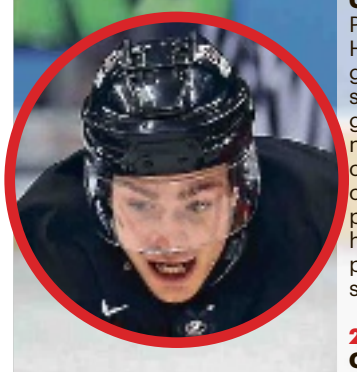
ANTHONY BEAUVILLIER

Left-winger, Sorel, Que.

One of the youngest players on Canada's roster this year, Beauvillier impressed at selection camp in early December, scoring four times in two games against Canadian university all-stars, including a hat trick. His strong play continued into pre-competition exhibition games. He could be a breakout star of the tournament if his hand stays hot.

2015-16 stats (Shawinigan Cataractes, QMJHL)

GP	G	A	+/-	PIM
21	17	24	6	31



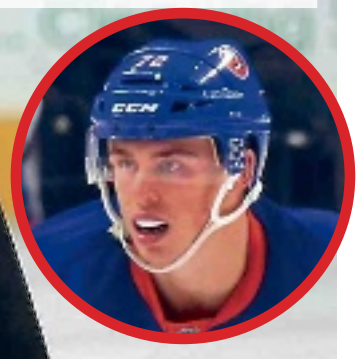
BRAYDEN POINT

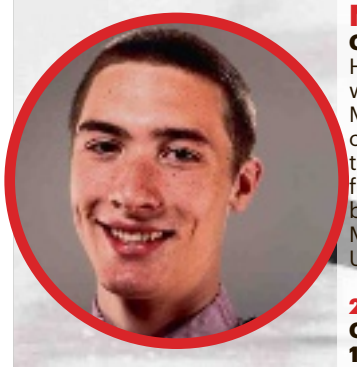
Centre, Calgary

Point is arguably the best player in the Western Hockey League and a veteran of Canada's 2014 gold-medal junior team. However, he injured his shoulder on Nov. 17, forcing him to miss several games for the Moose Jaw Warriors and wear a non-contact jersey for Canada's selection camp. He played in Canada's pre-competition games but also missed some practices to rest his injury. If he's on the ice he's one of Canada's most dynamic playmakers. If he's injured, Canada will need to scramble to find a distributor of Point's ability.

2015-16 stats (Moose Jaw Warriors, WHL)

GP	G	A	+/-	PIM
19	18	25	9	8





MASON MCDONALD

Goaltender, Halifax

Hockey Canada's original plan was to carry two goaltenders, with Mackenzie Blackwood being the presumptive starter and McDonald keeping him sharp as a skilled backup. That all changed when Blackwood was suspended for eight games by the OHL on Dec. 8. Now Blackwood can't dress for Canada's first two games of the world juniors, putting McDonald between the pipes and last-minute addition Samuel Montembeault on the bench. McDonald, at least against the United States and Denmark, will have all eyes on him.

2015-16 stats (Charlottetown Islanders, QMJHL)

GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
19	7	12	3.47	0.893

DYLAN STROME

Centre, Mississauga, Ont.

All the attention has been showered on outspoken winger Mitch Marner ahead of the world junior championship, but Strome will be the centre for Canada's top line at the tournament. The third-overall pick of the 2015 NHL draft, Strome is Canada's most talented player in Helsinki, Finland. How he and longtime friend Mitch Marner react to the pressure of the event could decide if Canada will repeat as world champions.

2015-16 stats (Erie Otters, OHL)

GP	G	A	+/-	PIM
25	16	37	15	12



THE CANADIAN PRESS/GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

NFL

Coach strikes out Panthers' use of bat

A frustrated Ron Rivera will no longer allow Carolina players to bring baseball bats on the field before games, even though he said the Panthers have done nothing wrong.

The Panthers coach is upset about what he said are untrue reports that some players taunted Giants wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. with physical threats and homophobic slurs before Sunday's game.

Rivera said Tuesday that the Panthers wouldn't stand for that kind of behaviour and the team found no evidence it occurred.

When asked if the Panthers hadn't broken any league rules why he made the decision do away with taking the bat on the field, Rivera said, "because I'm going to hear it if I don't.

"That's the truth of the matter," Rivera said. "So to avoid the situation and set of circumstances, let's just eliminate it. So that's what we're going to do. Again, it's the No Fun League for a reason."

Neither the Giants nor Beckham have released any statements accusing the Panthers of taunting the wide receiver before the game with physical harm or homophobic slurs.

Rivera said homophobic slurs are an important social issue and he doesn't take them lightly.

"If there is something out there that is factual, that there is truth or hard evidence, please present it to us as well so we can act accordingly," Rivera said. "We don't tolerate that here. We don't. If there is some truth to it we will react to it and handle it appropriately. Until there is, there's nothing for me to do."

The coach said the baseball bat is used by the Panthers as a motivational prop, representing the team having a home-run mentality when it comes to making big plays.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

APPEAL

Odell Beckham Jr. is going to have his appeal of his one-game suspension heard by a former NFL receiver.

The NFL said Tuesday that James Thrash will be the hearing officer for the appeal by the New York Giants receiver. The hearing will be held at an undisclosed time and place.

The league suspended Beckham on Monday for his conduct against Carolina, when he drew three personal foul penalties.



In this photo taken Dec. 13, **the Panthers' Bene Benwikere swings a bat as he takes the field.**

CURTIS COMPTON/ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA IN BRIEF

Kerr back at Warriors helm after back surgery

Steve Kerr was back in charge of the Golden State Warriors — for a practice at least.

Kerr ran practice Tuesday with interim coach Luke Walton out with an illness. Kerr has been out since training camp as he deals with complications from back surgery he had in the off-season.

"I felt pretty good but I'm not 100 per cent healthwise," Kerr said. "But I'm getting better, building some strength. Today was a good day." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Severe knee injury hard for Irving to forget

Cavaliers guard Kyrie Irving has vowed to never watch another replay of his knee injury in last season's NBA Finals.

Irving said following practice on Tuesday that he looked at the video of him breaking his left kneecap in Game 1 eight times since last June.

But the 23-year-old swore he won't look at it again, saying, "I had to let it go."

Irving scored 12 points in 18 minutes in his season debut Sunday against Philadelphia. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Alex Anthopoulos served as the Blue Jays general manager from 2009-2015. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Anthopoulos at peace with decision

MLB

Ex-Jays GM says he expects to be employed next month

A two-month break from the grind of the baseball off-season has been good for former Toronto Blue Jays general manager Alex Anthopoulos.

It has given him a chance to introduce some balance in his life and spend more time with friends and family. He's also mulling over potential work options and expects to return to the sport he loves next month.

Anthopoulos, looking relaxed and content during an interview with The Canadian Press at a midtown café in Toronto, has enjoyed his time at home since turning down a contract offer to stay with the Blue Jays.

"I get to give my wife a break," he said. "I'd say I'm learning what it's like to live a normal life again, which is kind of nice. You kind of forget what you miss."

Anthopoulos stunned fans and baseball observers by turning down a long-term deal a few days after his team was eliminated by the Kansas City Royals in the American League Championship Series. He was eventually replaced by Ross Atkins, a former Cleveland Indians executive who had worked with new Blue Jays president Mark Shapiro.

The decision ended Anthopoulos's 12-year run with the team. He first joined the club as a scouting co-ordinator in 2003 and had served as GM since 2009.

Toronto won the East Division title in 2015 and returned to the post-season for the first time in 22 years.

Anthopoulos could very well find himself employed again soon.

"I'm getting there and come next month, come January, I'll work again," Anthopoulos said. "Most likely for a team but it's not 100 per cent. There were some media opportunities that came up that were interesting just from a quality-of-life standpoint. "But then the more I thought about it, it's most likely I'll stay in baseball. Just because I've done it so long and I'm still young in my baseball career. I don't think I'm prepared to walk away."

The team he helped build is expected to be a contender again in 2016.

Anthopoulos will be watching from the outside, but has no regrets about turning down a lucrative long-term deal.

"Trust me, I thought about it a lot. I tried to talk myself into it," he said.

"Like I talked about at the time, it was more instinctive. Again it was just how I felt, and it wouldn't be fair to the organization, to ownership, to everybody if I wasn't totally mentally fulfilled.... I know myself. I can't fake it. At 38 years old, I don't want to just cash a cheque and just mail it in. I don't want to just show up to work every day and not be passionate and driven and excited.

"You need to be all in. So if you're not, I'm not going to take the money and do that job. I just can't."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

DEPARTURE

Anthopoulos went out with his stock at a high. He was named Major League Baseball executive of the year by the Sporting News on the same day he announced that he wouldn't be returning to the Blue Jays.



Alex Anthopoulos and Jose Bautista celebrate the Blue Jays' berth into the ALCS this past October.

TOM SZCZERBOWSKI/GETTY IMAGES

RECIPE Roasted Shrimp and Broccoli over Soba Noodles



PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI



Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Skip takeout and whip up this easy noodle dish.

Ready in
Prep time: 25 minutes
Serves 4

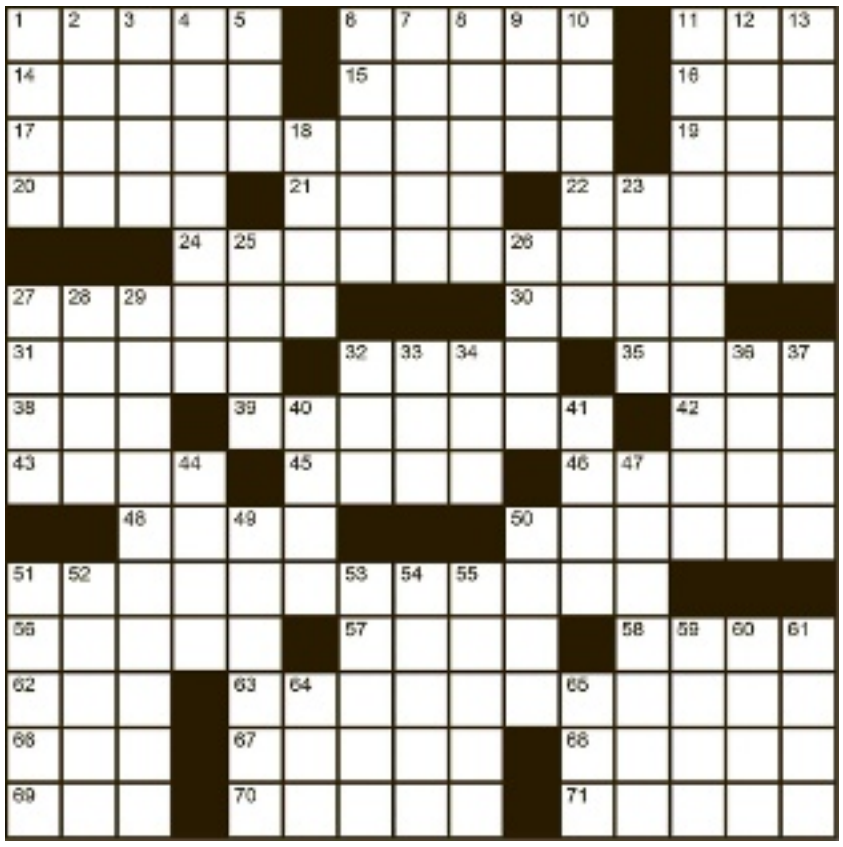
Ingredients
- 1 x 8 oz package of soba noodles
- 1 lb large shrimp, peeled and cleaned
- 1 head of broccoli, trimmed into small florets
- 4 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 Tbsp sesame oil
- 2 Tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions
1. Preheat the oven to 425 F. Get a big pot of water on to boil.
2. In a small bowl, mix together your oils, vinegar, lemon juice and a bit of salt and pepper. In a large bowl, toss together your broccoli and half of that marinade. Now spread it out evenly across two baking sheets and pop it in a hot oven for 10 minutes.
3. In that same bowl, toss your shrimp with the other half of the marinade. When the broccoli has been in the oven for 10 minutes, take out the sheets, turn the broccoli over and add the shrimp evenly across the two sheets. Put it all back in the oven for another 10 minutes.
4. Cook your soba noodles according to package instructions.
5. In the final 2 or 3 minutes, take the baking sheets out and give everything another stir. In the end the broccoli should be firm but tender and all the shrimp should be opaque and pink.
6. Drain the soba noodles and turn them out onto a big platter. Spoon the broccoli and shrimp over top. Pour any juices that have accumulated in the pan on top.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. "Sleigh Ride" bit: "..._-up, let's go..."
6. Nova Scotia island
11. Month parts [abbr.]
14. Blazing
15. Mountain chain
16. 'Serpent' suffix
17. Seasonal tune covered by Canadian singer Kim Stockwood: "It's a _ World"
19. Christmas beverage
20. 'Kitchen' suffix
21. Brain wave
22. Like poodle skirts now
24. Trendy Christmas fashions: 2 wds.
27. Progresses
30. Prod
31. Surrealist artist Max
32. Orange juice stuff
35. "_ it about time?"
38. Stop-_-_
39. House levels, variantly
42. "Gosh!"
43. Singer on "Do They Know It's Christmas?": Boy George aka George O'_
45. To the _ (Fully)
46. 'My Christmas Favorites': Tennessee _ Ford album
48. Cartoon bear
50. Scant
51. "The Twelve Days of Christmas" has eleven: 2 wds.
56. "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas / Just like the _ _ used to know..." - Irving Berlin
57. Driving 4x4s, commonly
58. Christmas angel spot
62. School org.
63. Resort hills are illuminated for it: 2 wds.
66. Bother
67. Sports shoe's slip stopper
68. In with
69. Yesses opposites
70. _-totsy
71. Heads: French

DOWN
1. Up for it
2. "_ _ first you don't succeed..."
3. Soil
4. #49-Down is based on his book: 2 wds.
5. Slangy affirmation, variantly
6. "A Very _ Christmas" (1988 TV movie starring a '70s family sitcom cast)
7. Wheezing noises
8. Bride's new relative
9. Pride
10. Prepare the gift once more
11. Festive tune by Sarah McLachlan that starts "Lake is frozen over..."
12. Bouillon brand
13. Some lilies
18. Wire diameter measures
23. Needle case
25. Comprehends
26. Catch a glimpse
27. Remain unsettled
28. Jason's craft
29. Rocky Mountain features: 2 wds.
32. Taro root dish
33. Website
34. Permit
36. Film _ (Movie genre)
37. Yoredom's 'you'
40. Not that
41. Visible
44. Performs
47. "Alexander's _ Band" by #56-Across
49. Jim Carrey's 'Mean' 2000 Christmas role
50. Pine for
51. Make a brief visit: 2 wds.
52. Brief beginning
53. Washington's _ Sound
54. "_ _ potential." (House buyer's observation)
55. "Christmas All Over Again" by Tom _ & The Heartbreakers
59. Hilarious human
60. Feminine suffix
61. #19-Across ingredients
64. UN workers agcy.
65. Kit _ (Chocolate treat)

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Go your own way and do your own thing. Don't expect support from others. You'll discover you're better off without them anyway. You know what needs to be done, now do it.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Your instincts will guide and protect you. Don't be fearful. Anyone who doubts that you can be original will have those doubts silenced. Now is the time to take chances.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You will give freely of your time and energy today but take care that your generosity is not abused. Sometimes you can be too easy-going for your own good. Give only to those who deserve your help.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Surprises are likely, so brace yourself for unexpected changes. You may not have much control over what's taking place in your life, but that does not mean you won't enjoy it.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
If you're going to take a risk, if you're going to put everything you've gained on the line, now is the time. There is no guarantee you'll win but the odds are definitely in your favour.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You will go against accepted wisdom today. Deep down you know your way is best, even if the whole world is against you. You will make some outrageous decisions, and each and every one of them will be right!

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You will surprise yourself and do something that scares you. You might even make a success of it. But even if you don't you'll still impress people in positions of power.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Do what makes you happy, not what makes other people happy. If that makes you unpopular in certain circles, so be it. You might find yourself better off financially without them as well.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You feel inspired to do something out of the ordinary. Whatever it may be, and whatever the reaction, you're sure to make a success of it and you're sure to make money from it.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Let your hair down and let others see you are not at all the conservative Capricorn they think you are. Don't worry if you shock certain people. The way to get noticed nowadays is to act just a little bit outrageous.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Don't worry if you fall behind in your everyday routine. What matters is that you give some thought to the direction your life is heading. A change of course may be necessary.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You have to be a bit more adventurous now. If you want to get in other people's good books then do something different, something they would never expect of you.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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	6					7	
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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

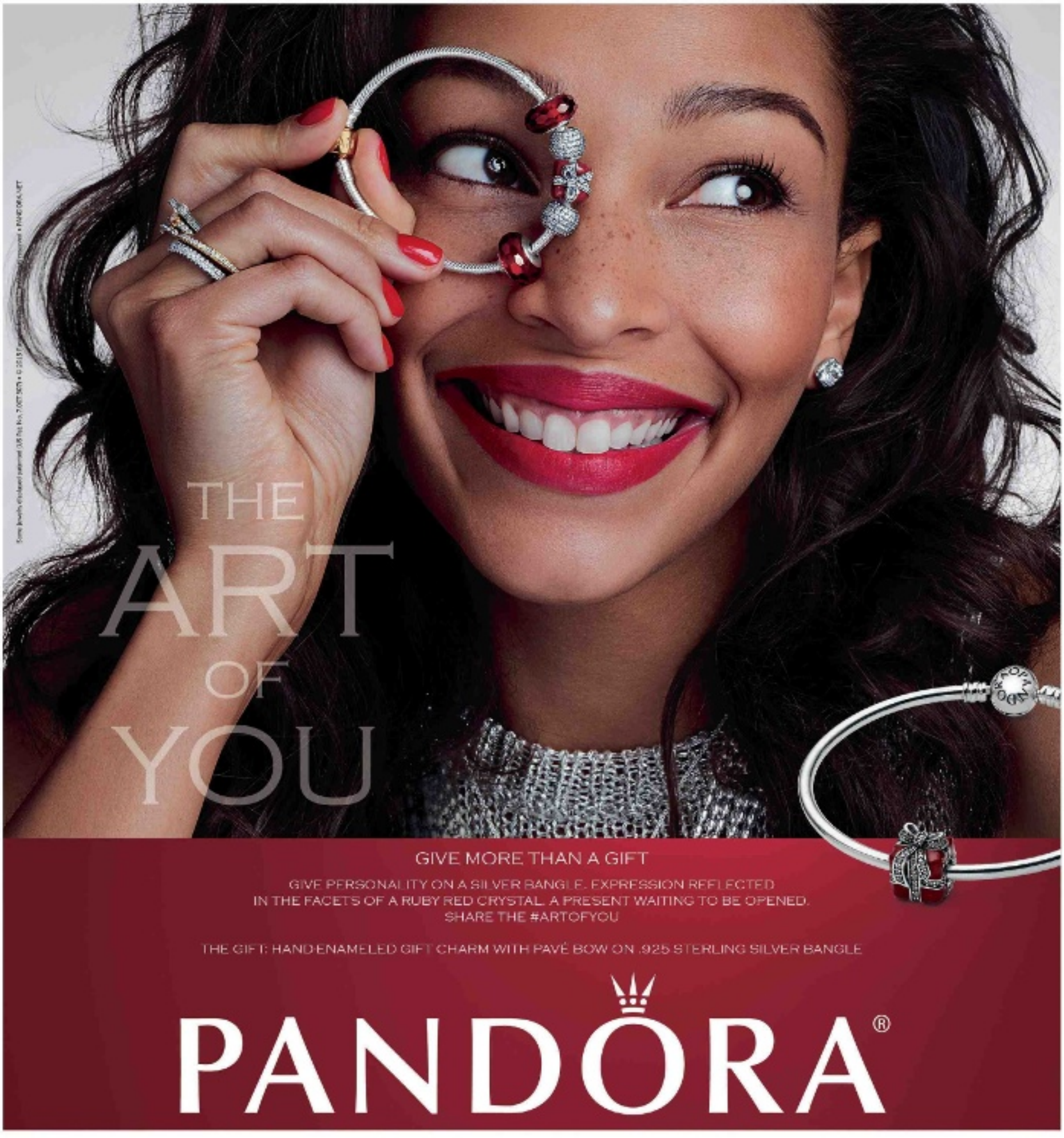
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1	2	8	7	6	5	3	4	9
6	7	4	9	1	3	8	2	5
9	8	2	4	5	7	6	3	1
4	3	6	1	8	9	2	5	7
7	5	1	3	2	6	4	9	8
5	1	7	8	3	4	9	6	2
8	4	9	6	7	2	5	1	3
2	6	3	5	9	1	7	8	4

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